

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

11
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY S:WEGAN:LCK
APPROVED BY S:LSEAGLEBURGER
S/S : JLHOGANSON

-
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
S ONLY

----- 090910
P 220402Z JAN 76 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

NODIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.), PFOR

SUBJECT: KENNAN'S COMMENTS ON "DETENTE", THE CIA, AND
ANGOLA

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM EAGLEBURGER

1. I HAVE JUST RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING NOTES FROM GEORGE
KENNAN: THE FIRST BEING HIS THOUGHTS ON THE CIA AND ITS
COVERT OPERATIONS AND SOME BRIEF COMMENTS ON ANGOLA; AND
THE SECOND, THE TEXT OF A KENNAN LETTER TO DR. MARION
GRAFIN DONHOFF OF "DIE ZEIT" IN WHICH HE THOUGHT YOU
MIGHT BE INTERESTED.

2. COVERING NOTE:
BEGIN QUOTE: DEAR LARRY: HAVING IN MIND THE SECRETARY'S
IMMINENT DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW, I AM TAKING THE LIBERTY OF
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

SENDING TO YOU TWO SMALL DOCUMENTS FROM MY OWN PEN WHICH
I THOUGHT HE MIGHT LIKE TO HAVE AS LIGHT READING ON THE
AIRPLANE.

ONE IS A NOTE I PENNED TO HIM THE OTHER DAY IN A MOMENT

OF LEISURE IN NEW YORK, BUT HESITATED TO SEND ON TO HIM UNTIL I READ THAT HE WAS ABOUT TO DEPART FOR RUSSIA. THE OTHER IS A COPY OF A LETTER WRITTEN TO A GERMAN EDITOR WHOM HE KNOWS WELL. IT IS SOLELY FOR HIS OWN PERUSAL, AND SHOULD BE DESTROYED OR RETURNED THEREAFTER. HE WILL NOT LIKE ALL OF IT, PARTICULARLY THE FIRST PAGE; BUT IT IS NOT TO BE EXPECTED THAT HE SHOULD.

SHOULD YOU NOT THINK IT WARRANTED TO PASS THESE ON TO HIM, KINDLY RETURN THEM.

WITH WARM REGARDS, SINCERELY YOURS, GEORGE KENNAN. END QUOTE.

3. BEGIN QUOTE: DEAR MR. SECRETARY:

YOU HAVE ENCOURAGED ME TO FEEL THAT I MIGHT OCCASIONALLY LET YOU KNOW IF I HAD ON MY MIND ANY THOUGHTS THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY DESERVE CONSIDERATION. I AM GOING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT SUGGESTION THIS EVENING. I PROMISE NOT TO DO SO OFTEN.

THERE IS OBVIOUSLY AT THIS MOMENT GREAT DISARRAY AND CONFUSION, IN THE PRESS AND IN THE PUBLIC MIND, ABOUT CIA AND ITS SCRET OPERATIONS. I WRITE TO GIVE IT TO YOU AS MY CONVICTION THAT THE ONLY CURE FOR THIS SITUATION IS THE COMPLETE TERMINATION OF ALL ACTIVITIES OF THIS NATURE -- NOW, AND FOR A LONG TIME TO COME. IN THE PRESENT ATMOSPHERE THEY CAN ONLY DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD.

THE FIRST REQUIREMENT FOR SECRET OPERATIONS IS THAT THEY REMAIN SECRET. IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, WITH THE PRESS HYSTERICAL ON THE SUBJECT, WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS SEEING THE FOOT OF THE AGENCY PROTRUDING FROM UNDER EVERY BED, AND WITH THE AGENCY ITSELF LEAKING LIKE A SIEVE IN EVERY DIRECTION, THIS IS QUITE IMPOSSIBLE. THE ONLY THING THAT WILL CURE THIS SITUATION IS A LONG PERIOD OF COMPLETE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

INACTIVITY AND OF A TOTAL DISCIPLINED SILENCE ON THE PART OF EVERYONE CONCERNED: NO STATEMENTS, NO EXPLANATIONS, ONLY -- IN SPECIFIC INSTANCES -- A WELL-FOUNDED AND COMPLETE DENIAL.

I AM GREATLY DISTRESSED OVER ANGOLA. NEVER, IT SEEMS TO ME, HAVE I SEEN GREATER CONFUSION IN THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC MIND OVER ANY QUESTIONS OF FOREIGN POLICY. I DO NOT THINK THE RUSSIANS REALLY MEANT TO GET INTO ANYTHING AS COMPLICATED AS THIS. I THINK THEY RATHER WANDERED INTO IT BY NEGLIGENCE AND FORCE OF HABIT -- THE RIGHT HAND NOT KNOWING WHAT THE LEFT HAND WAS DOING. I SUSPECT THEY WOULD BE GLAD TO FIND A WAY OUT -- BUT FOR THIS, THEY MUST

NOT BE PUT ON THE SPOT. I SHOULD THINK THAT GREATER CRITICAL CONCENTRATION, ON OUR PART, ON THE CUBANS -- AND LESS ON THE RUSSIANS -- MIGHT BE HELPFUL.

IT WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL IF THE SOUTH AFRICANS (THE CLUMSIEST OF PARTICIPANTS IN WORLD AFFAIRS) COULD BE INDUCED TO GIVE A BIT MORE OPEN AND COHERENT PICTURE OF THE RATIONALE FOR THEIR OWN ACTIONS. THEIR ENTRY ONTO THE ANGOLAN SCENE WAS NEITHER UNEXPECTED (I WROTE, THREE YEARS AGO, IN "FOREIGN AFFAIRS" THAT THEY WOULD BE COMPELLED TO ENTER SOUTHERN ANGOLA IF PORTUGUESE RULE SHOULD BE OVERTHROWN THERE) NOR WAS IT WITHOUT SOLID JUSTIFICATION. BUT THEY HAVE NOT EXPLAINED THIS; AND THE RESULT IS EVEN MORE CONFUSION THAN IS NECESSARY.

ENOUGH. FORGIVE THE INTRUSION.

SINCERELY - AND WITH HIGH RESPECT - GEORGE KENNAN. END QUOTE.

4. BEGIN QUOTE: DEAR MARION:
THIS IS IN REPLY TO YOURS OF DECEMBER 23. I SHALL TRY TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS; AND YOU MAY MAKE SUCH USE AS YOU WISH TO MAKE OF MY OBSERVATIONS.

I FIND MYSELF NOT AT ALL IN AGREEMENT WITH THE BONN THESIS, AS YOU HAVE DESCRIBED IT. IT APPEARS TO ME TO REST ON A CURIOUS SET OF IDEAS, RELATING TO WHAT IS
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

CALLED "DETENTE"; AND TO EXPLAIN MY OWN OBJECTIONS TO THIS BONN THESIS, I MUST FIRST SPEAK A LITTLE ABOUT DETENTE.

I AM FREE TO CONFESS THAT I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THIS TERM MEANS. THERE SEEMS TO BE AN IMPRESSION ABOUT THATAT SOME TIME AROUND 1970 THERE WAS A SHARP CHANGE IN US-SOVIET RELATIONS, MARKING A NEW PHASE IN THE RELATIONSHIP TO BE KNOWN AS DETENTE; THAT THIS WAS BASED ON SOME SORT OF AN AGREEMENT OR UNDERSTANDING NOT ONLY BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES BUT BETWEEN MOSCOW AND THE WEST GENERALLY; BUT THAT RECENTLY THE SOVIET LEADERS HAVE FAILED TO LIVE UP TO THIS AGREEMENT BECAUSE THEY HAVE (A) CONTINUED TO

BUILD UP THEIR ARMAMENTS, (B) INTERVENED, IF ONLY INDIRECTLY, IN ANGOLA, AND (C) FAILED TO RELAX THE RESTRICTIONS ON THEIR OWN CITIZENS. I KNOW OF NO JUSTIFICATION FOR ANY PART OF THIS BELIEF.

THE IDEA THAT THERE WAS SOME SORT OF SHARP CHANGE IN POLICY AND IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND THE

SOVIET UNION IN THE EARLY 1970'S WAS A MYTH PROPOGATED BY THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION FOR ITS OWN INTERNAL-POLITICAL PURPOSES, EAGERLY SUPPORTED AND INFLATED BY THE WESTERN PRESS -- OR LARGE PARTS OF IT, AND HAPPILY SUSTAINED BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT -- ONCE AGAIN, FOR PURPOSES OF ITS OWN. I DON'T MEAN THAT THERE WERE NO IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SOVIET-WESTERN RELATIONSHIP AT THE TIME IN QUESTION, OR THAT THESE IMPROVEMENTS WERE NOT OF SERIOUS VALUE. BUT IN ALMOST EVERY CASE, THEY WERE CHANGES THAT WERE UNDER DISCUSSION OR IN COURSE OF PREPARATION WELL BEFORE MR. NIXON CAME TO OFFICE AND WELL BEFORE ANYONE THOUGHT OF USING THE TERM DETENTE IN THE SENSE TO WHICH WE HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED. CIRCUMSTANCES JUST HAPPENED TO BE FAVORABLE, IN THE EARLY 1970'S, TO THEIR COMPLETION.

SECONDLY, THERE WAS NEVER ANY GENERAL AGREEMENT ENVISAGING A BASIC CHANGE IN RELATIONS. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS, WHICH -- SO FAR AS I KNOW -- THE RUSSIANS HAVE OBSERVED QUITE FAITHFULLY: AGREEMENTS FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 05 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

ACADEMIC EXCHANGES, EXPANSION OF CONSULAR REPRESENTATION, COLLABORATION IN THE EXPLORATION OF OUTER SPACE, ETC. BEYOND THIS, THERE WERE ONLY THE USUAL CLOUDY AND HIGH-SOUNDING COMMUNIQUES THAT FOLLOW SUMMIT MEETINGS; AND THERE WAS, OF COURSE, HELSINKI, ABOUT WHICH -- A WORD, PRESENTLY.

AT NO TIME, TO MY KNOWLEDGE, DID THE RUSSIANS EVER ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENT OR UNDERSTANDING OF A GENERAL NATURE TO HALT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR ARMED FORCES. AT NO TIME DID THEY EVER ENCOURAGE US TO BELIEVE THAT DETENTE WOULD MEAN THE END OF THEIR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THE SUCCESS OF LEFT-WING FORCES IN THE THIRD WORLD; ON THE CONTRARY, THEY REMINDED US A HUNDRED TIMES, IF THEY DID SO ONCE, THAT DETENTE DID NOT APPLY IN THE IDEOLOGICAL FIELD. AND AS FOR CHANGES IN THEIR INTERNAL POLICIES: YES, IF YOU WANT TO TAKE SERIOUSLY THE VAGUE GENERALITIES OF THE HELSINKI DOCUMENTS; BUT I MUST SAY THAT IT TOOK THE WILDEST NAIVETE -- A NAIVETE UNWORTHY OF SERIOUS STATEMEN OR JOURNALISTS -- TO SUPPOSE THAT LANGUAGE OF THIS NATURE, NEGOTIATED IN THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS NEGOTIATED, WOULD REALLY CAUSE THE KREMLIN TO RELAX THE

SEVERITY OF THE DICTATORSHIP "OF THE PROLETARIAT." FOR YEARS, I HAVE TRIED TO WARN OUR GOVERNMENT AGAINST AGREEMENTS WITH THE RUSSIANS INVOLVING GENERAL LANGUAGE -- GENERAL TERMS SUCH AS "DEMOCRATIC", "PEACE-LOVING", ETC.-- AND PARTICULARLY WHEN SUCH AGREEMENTS ARE NEGOTIATED BEFORE THE PUBLIC EYE, WITH THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE; FOR

THE RUSSIANS TEND THEN TO VIEW THEM AS WHAT THEY CALL
"DEMONSTRATIVNYE PEREGOVORY" -- DEMONSTRATIVE NEGOTIATIONS,
CONDUCTED NOT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE IN THE ROOM
BUT THROUGH THE WINDOW, SO TO SPEAK, FOR THE CROWD OUT-
SIDE; AND IN THIS CASE, THEY NEGOTIATE IN A SPIRIT OF
"CAVEAT EMPTOR." I CAN FIND NO SYMPATHY FOR STATESMEN AND
JOURNALISTS WHO SO RECKLESSLY DISREGARD THE LESSONS OF
HISTORY AS TO BELIEVE THAT THE HELSINKI TALKS WERE REALLY
GOING TO CHANGE SOMETHING IMPORTANT IN SOVIET BEHAVIOR.

NOW, AS FOR WHAT THE RUSSIANS ARE DOING TODAY: CAN IT NOT
BE FINALLY UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED IN WESTERN DIPLOMACY
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 06 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

THAT THE SOVIET RELATIONSHIP TO THE ADVANCED WEST IS A
COMPLICATED ONE, IN WHICH THERE IS NOT MUCH ROOM; FOR
MANEUVRAGE? FOR MANY YEARS, EVER SINCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE RUSSO-CHINESE CONFLICT IN THE LATE 1950'S, THE SOVIET
LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN DRIVEN, IN THIS RELATIONSHIP, BY
QUITE CONTRADICTORY IMPULSES. ON THE ONE HAND, THESE
MEN SEE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COMMERCIAL RELATION-
SHIP WITH THE WEST THE QUICKEST AND MOST CONVENIENCE
ROAD (NOT, MARK YOU, THE ONLY ROAD, MERELY THE QUICKEST
AND MOST CONVENIENT) TO THE OVERCOMING OF CERTAIN OF THE
MOST PAINFUL DEFICIENCIES IN THEIR OWN INDUSTRIAL AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. BEYOND THIS, THEY FEEL A STRONG
NEED TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE CHINESE, NOT JUST ONCE BUT
CONSTANTLY AND REPEATEDLY, THAT THEY ARE NOT DEPENDENT
ON THEIR RELATIONS WITH CHINA: THAT THEY HAVE OTHER
FAVORABLE ALTERNATIVES, THAT THEY CAN LIVE VERY WELL,
THANK YOU, WITHOUT CHINA. FOR THIS REASON, THEY WANT
THE APPEARANCE OF A GOOD AND CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH
THE WEST. BUT THEY ARE REALISTS ENOUGH TO RECOGNIZE THAT
THEY CANNOT HAVE THE APPEARANCE WITHOUT HAVING, IN SOME
MEASURE, THE REALITY AS WELL; AND THEY HAVE BEEN WILLING
TO MAKE COMPROMISES ALONG THESE LINES -- COMPROMISES
WHICH HAVE TAKEN THE FORM OF CERTAIN OF THE REAL GAINS
OF THE DETENTE PERIOD.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THESE SAME MEN ARE VERY DEEPLY CON-
CERNED FOR THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AND WITH THE LEFT-WING
NATIONAL-LIBERATION MOVEMENTS OF THE THIRD WORLD -- AN
AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE OF COURSE BEING SUBJECTED TO THE
HEAVIEST SORT OF PRESSURE FROM THE CHINESE. FOR THE

REASONS I HAVE JUST CITED, THEY WANT AT LEAST OUTWARDLY
GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE ADVANCED WEST; BUT FOR REASONS
OF THE WEIGHTIEST SORT -- REASONS HAVING TO DO BOTH WITH
THEIR INNATE DISTRUST OF THE CAPITALIST WORLD AND WITH
THEIR OWN IMAGE OF THEMSELVES AND OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF

THEIR OWN MOVEMENT -- THEY WOULD DREAD A SITUATION IN
WHICH THEIR SECURITY HAD NO OTHER SUPPORT THAN THEIR
RELATIONS WITH THE WEST. SO THEY FEEL COMPELLED TO
DEFEND THEMSELVES IN EVERY WAY THEY CAN AGAINST THE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 07 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

CHINESE CHARGE THAT THEY ARE NOT GOOD MARXIST-LENINISTS,
THAT THEY ARE SELLING OUT THE HOLY FAITH, ETC. THIS
MEANS THAT THEY MUST CONTINUE TO TALK AND TO BEHAVE,
WHENEVER PUT TO THE TEST, AS GOOD, PRINCIPLED MARXIST-
COMMUNISTS, FAVORING ANTI-EUROPEAN, ANTI-AMERICAN AND
ANTI-WESTERN MOVEMENTS, ENCOURAGING ANY POLITICAL DEVELO-
PMENT THAT EVEN GIVES THE APPEARANCE OF LEADING TOWARD
RADICAL-SOCIALIST REVOLUTION. THE WEST HAS NO RIGHT TO
EXPECT THEM TO BEHAVE OTHERWISE. IT HAS NO RIGHT TO
EXPECT THEM TO DISCOURSE, OUTWARDLY, A TRIUMPH OF THE
PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS OR OF THE MPLA IN ANGOLA, OR WHAT
YOU WILL. THEY MAY HOPE, SECRETLY, THAT ONE OR ANOTHER
OF THESE MOVEMENTS WILL NOT SUCCEED (I SUSPECT THAT THIS
WAS THE CASE BOTH WITH RESPECT TO THE PORTUGUESE AND THE
ITALIAN COMMUNISTS); BUT THEY CANNOT ADMIT THIS PUBLICLY,
FOR THE CHINESE WOULD INSTANTLY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

THE SOVIET LEADERS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO RESOLVE THIS CON-
TRADICTION BY OFFERING TO THE WESTERN POWERS, IN EFFECT,
RELAXATION OF TENSION AND GREATER COLLABORATION ON THE
BILATERAL PLANE, WHILE INSISTING ON THE RIGHT TO BEHAVE
LIKE A TRADITIONAL COMMUNIST POWER IN THEIR RELATIONS
WITH THIRD COUNTRIES AND AREAS. THIS, OF COURSE, IS NOT
IDEAL, FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE WEST. BUT IT IS BETTER
THAN NOTHING; THE GAINS THUS MADE REPRESENT FAIRLY
IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENTS OVER WHAT EXISTED TWENTY OR THIRTY
YEARS AGO; AND THERE IS NO REASON TO TURN UP ONE'S NOSE
AT LIMITED IMPROVEMENTS JUST BECAUSE ONE CANNOT HAVE
TOTAL ONES.

ALL THIS HAS LITTLE OR NOTHING TO DO WITH THE QUESTION OF
MILITARY PREPARATIONS. HERE, TOO, THERE IS A CONTRA-
DICTION -- OR AT LEAST THE APPEARANCE OF ONE. ON THE ONE
HAND, THESE SOVIET LEADERS ARE WELL AWARE (MUCH BETTER
THAN THE WESTERN PRESS SEEMS TO BE) OF THE APPALLING
DANGER REPRESENTED, NOT JUST FOR THEMSELVES BUT OF
HUMANITY AT LARGE, BY THE UNCONSCIONABLE QUANTITIES OF
NUCLEAR OVERKILL NOW IN EXISTENCE, AND BY THE RAPID
PROLIFERATION OF THE POWER OF DISPOSAL OVER SUCH WEAPONS.
THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS DANGER MITIGATED; AND THEY
ARE THEREFORE WILLING, AS IS EVIDENCED IN THE SALT TALKS,
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 08 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

TO PURSUE DISCUSSIONS TO THIS END. THE FACT THAT THEY ARE HANDICAPPED IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS BY THEIR OWN PATHO-LOGICAL PREOCCUPATION WITH SECRECY DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE SOME POSITIVE RESULT FLOW FROM THEM.

AT THE SAME TIME, THEY REMAIN COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS ON A SCALE FAR GREATER THAN ANYONE ELSE CAN SEE THE NEED FOR. THE REASONS FOR THIS ARE ONES THAT REACH DEEPLY INTO THE RUSSIAN PAST. THE MAINTENANCE OF INORDINATE GROUND FORCES WAS A FEATURE OF RUSSIAN LIFE IN THE TIME OF

NICHOLAS I, IN THE TIME OF ALEXANDER III, AND IN THE TIME OF STALIN. EVEN IN THE 1920'S RUSSIA WAS MAINTAINING BY FAR THE LARGEST GROUND FORCES OF ANY EUROPEAN POWER, ALTHOUGH GERMANY WAS PROSTRATE AND THE FRENCH -- 2,000 MILES AWAY. ONE MUST ASSUME THAT THIS HAS TO DO WITH A CERTAIN INNER INSECURITY; WITH AN AWARENESS OF WEAKNESSES ASSIDUOUSLY CONCEALED FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD; BUT ALSO WITH A NEED TO KEEP LARGE PORTIONS OF YOUNG MANPOWER AT ALL TIMES UNDER DISCIPLINED CONTROL AND AVAILABLE, IF NEED BE, FOR INTERNAL USE.

I DO NOT MEAN FOR A MOMENT TO DENY THAT THIS IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR THE WESTERN POWERS. ON THE CONTRARY, I THINK THE WEST SHOULD HAVE MADE MORE OF AN ISSUE OF IT, IN ITS RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA, THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE. BUT IT IS NOT A PROBLEM THAT AROSE WITH DETENTE OR INDEED THAT HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH DETENTE; AND THE FACT THAT IT REMAINS UNSOLVED, TODAY, SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED IN THE WEST AS THE RESULT OF SOME FAILURE ON THE RUSSIAN PART TO LIVE UP TO SOME SORT OF GENERAL AGREEMENTS UNDER THIS HEADING.

THE FACT THAT DIFFICULTIES CONTINUE TO EXIST IS NO REASON FOR DESPAIRING OF THE WHOLE EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA, AND FOR RETURNING TO ALL THE STERILE RIGORS OF THE COLD WAR.

RUSSIA IS A COUNTRY RULED TODAY BY AN OLD AND TIRED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 09 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

BUREAUCRACY, CAUGHT UP IN THE HABITS AND POLICIES AND CONCEPTS OF THE PAST, DIMLY AWARE OF THE INADEQUACY OF ALL THESE LATTER IN THE FACE OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT, BUT FEARFUL OF CHANGE AND DEVOID OF CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS. ITS LEADERS, MOSTLY PEOPLE IN THEIR LATE SIXTIES AND EARLY SEVENTIES, ARE NOT INCLINED TOWARDS MAJOR INNOVATIONS OF POLICY, PARTICULARLY NOT RISKY OR

ADVENTURESONE ONES, AND PARTICULARLY NOT ON THE EVE OF A NEW PARTY CONGRESS. THEY FACE MANY SERIOUS INTERNAL PROBLEMS; AND THEIR WHOLE MOTIVATION IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS IS BASICALLY DEFENSIVE: DEFENSIVE AGAINST THE CHINESE POLITICAL ATTACK, DEFENSIVE AGAINST THE DISTURBING IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUED WESTERN ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY. IT IS ABSURD TO PICTURE THESE MEN AS EMBARKED IN SOME NEW AND DARK PLOT TO ACHIEVE THE SUBJUGATION OF, AND THE DOMINATION OVER, WESTERN EUROPE. THEY ARE COMMITTED, TO BE SURE, TO A WHOLE SERIES OF HABITUAL POSTURES, REACTIONS, AND RHETORICAL UTTERANCES THAT MAY APPEAR TO BEAR IN THAT DIRECTION. BUT NONE OF THESE MANIFESTATIONS OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR ARE NEW; NONE ARE INSPIRED BY ANY BELIEF IN THE POSSIBILITIES FOR THEIR EARLY SUCCESS; AND THERE ARE NONE THAT SHOULD BE OCCASIONING FOR WESTERN STATESMEN ANY GREATER ANXIETIES THAN THEY WERE EXPERIENCING -- SAY -- TEN OR FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, BEFORE DETENTE EVER BEGAN TO BE TALKED ABOUT.

HERE, AS IN THE MILITARY FIELD, I AM NOT DENYING THAT THE OUTLOOKS AND POLICIES AND PROFERRED PURPOSES OF THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP DO NOT PRESENT SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR WESTERN STATESMANSHIP -- PROBLEMS WHICH DEMAND THEIR MOST THOUGHTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE ATTENTION. BUT I AM SAYING THAT THIS IS NOTHING NEW -- THAT THINGS HAVE BEEN THIS WAY FOR OVER HALF A CENTURY. AND I AM SAYING THAT WESTERN STATESMEN WILL NOT BE AIDED, IN THEIR EFFORT TO COPE WITH THIS PROBLEM, BY PERSUADING THEMSELVES THAT WHAT THEY HAVE TO CONTEND WITH IS SOME NEW AND MENACING DEPARTURE IN SOVIET DIPLOMACY AND STRATEGY. THEY WILL NOT BE AIDED BY TRYING TO BLAME THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT FOR CHANGES IN THE BALANCE OF POLITICAL FORCES THAT ARE OVERWHELMINGLY THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FAILURES OF WESTERN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 10 STATE 015882 TOSEC 010120

SOCIETY ITSELF. THEY WILL NOT BE AIDED BY FIRST NEGLECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR OWN CONVENTIONAL FORCES AND THEN BLAMING THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT BECAUSE THE MILITARY BALANCE RUNS IN WESTERN EUROPE'S DISFAVOR.

POOR OLD WEST: SUCCUMBING FEEBLY, DAY BY DAY, TO ITS OWN DECADENCE, SLIDING INTO DEBILITY ON THE SLIME OF ITS OWN SELF-INDULGENT PERMISSIVENESS: ITS DRUGS, ITS CRIME, ITS PORNGRAPHY, ITS PAMPERING OF THE YOUTH, ITS ADDICTION TO ITS BODILY COMFORTS, ITS RAMPANT MATERIALISM AND CONSUMERISM -- AND THEN TREMBLING BEFORE THE MENACE OF THE WICKED RUSSIANS, ALL PICTURED AS SUPERMEN, EIGHT FEET TALL, THEIR INTERNAL PROBLEMS ALL ESSENTIALLY SOLVED, AND WITH NOTHING ELSE NOW TO THINK ABOUT EXCEPT HOW TO BRING DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION TO WESTERN EUROPE. THIS PERSISTENT

EXTERNALIZATION OF THE SENSE OF DANGER -- THIS PERSISTENT

EXAGGERATION OF THE THREAT FROM WITHOUT AND BLINDNESS TO
THE THREAT FROM WITHIN: THIS IS THE SYMPTOM OF SOME DEEP
FAILURE TO COME TO TERMS WITH REALITY--AND WITH ONE'S
SELF. IF WESTERN EUROPE COULD BRING ITSELF TO THINK A
LITTLE LESS ABOUT HOW DEFENSELESS IT IS IN THE FACE OF THE
RUSSIANS, AND A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHAT IT IS THAT IT HAS
TO DEFEND, I WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE ABOUT ITS PROS-
PECTS FOR THE FUTURE.

THERE YOU ARE, DEAR MARION. FORGIVE THE POORLY EDITED
QUALITY OF THIS LETTER. I HAVE TYPED IT ALL IN ONE
EVENING, AFTER WORK, ON MY OWN LITTLE TYPEWRITER. YOU
MAY EDIT IT, TRANSLATE IT, AND USE IT AS YOU WILL--IF
YOU WILL.

WITH WARM AND AFFECTIONATE GREETINGS, AS EVER, GEORGE
KENNAN. END QUOTE. SISCO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 15 SEP 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, TEXT, DETENTE, PERSONAL OPINION, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE015882
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S:WEGAN:LCK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P840086-0287
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760199/baaaenzk.tel
Line Count: 454
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 9
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY NODIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 FEB 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <13 MAY 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KENNAN'S COMMENTS ON "DETENTE", THE CIA, AND
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, PINR, AO, US, CIA, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (KENNAN, GEORGE)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006